

You are hereby summoned to attend the meeting of Haverhill Town Council to be held in The Studio, Town Hall, High Street, Haverhill, on Tuesday 29th September 2009 commencing at 7.00 p.m., for the purpose of transacting the following business

CONSTITUTION: Town Mayor: Cllr. E McManus
Town Councillors: L Ager, S Bowes,
M Byrne, L Carr,
P French, A Gower,
P Hanlon, P McManus,
M Marks, Mrs M Martin,
G Price, K Richardson,
A Samuels and T
Woodward

AGENDA

1. **Apologies for Absence**
Please give any apologies to the office by 5.00p.m. of the day of the meeting.
2. **Declaration of Interests**
For Members to declare any interests they may have on items on the agenda.
3. **To confirm Minutes of Meeting held 28th July 2009**
4. **To deal with any urgent matters arising from the Minutes not covered by this agenda**
5. **Inspector Andrew Mason, Suffolk Police**
To discuss Policing issues in the Town.

PUBLIC FORUM

6. Adoption of Committee Reports

Planning Committee

To move the adoption of the minutes of the Planning Committee meetings held 4th August and 1st September 2009.

Arts & Leisure Committee

To move the adoption of the minutes of the Arts & Leisure Committee meeting held 8th September 2009.

Finance Committee

To move the adoption of the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held 15th September 2009.

7. Report from the Town Council Representative on the Standards Committee

8. Report from the Town Council Representative on the Haverhill Area Working Party

9. Report from the Town Council Representative on the Haverhill Partnership Executive

10. To Consider Possible Grants to Agencies Dealing with Those in Hardship

To consider whether to fund any of the known voluntary agencies operating in the town and dealing with those in hardship.

11. Update on the Project to Provide a Changing Place Facility near the Library

To receive an update and agree further action.

12. To Agree the Dates and Formats for 2010 Open-Air Meetings

To agree such further action as may be required. (see attached)

13. To Note The Completion of the 2008/2009 External Audit and Matters Raised and to Confirm Action to Address Those Matters

To note the completion of the 2008/2009 External Audit and matters raised and to confirm action to address those matters (see attached)

14. Correspondence

- a) St Edmundsbury Borough Council – Statement of Licensing Principles – Gambling Act 2005
To respond to the consultation
- b) Residents of Shetland Road
To consider a request for a bus shelter

15. To authorise payments.

To authorise the following cheque lists:-

Date	Cheque No.s	Value
16.07.09	005011	£190.00
21.07.09	005012 – 005031	£34,589.52
28.07.09	005032 – 005060	£15,258.11
04.08.09	005061 – 005079	£12,176.07
11.08.09	005080	£35,363.14
18.08.09	005081 – 005108	£14,646.25
25.08.09	005109 – 005130	£12,074.54
28.08.09	005131 – 005139	£23,594.65
08.09.09	005140 – 005161	£52,011.81
15.09.09	005162 – 005188	£12,620.25

16. To receive urgent correspondence

In accord with the Provisions of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 the public and press be excluded from the remainder of the meeting because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted

17. Bevan House

To receive a confidential report

18. To Confirm the Grading of Town Clerk

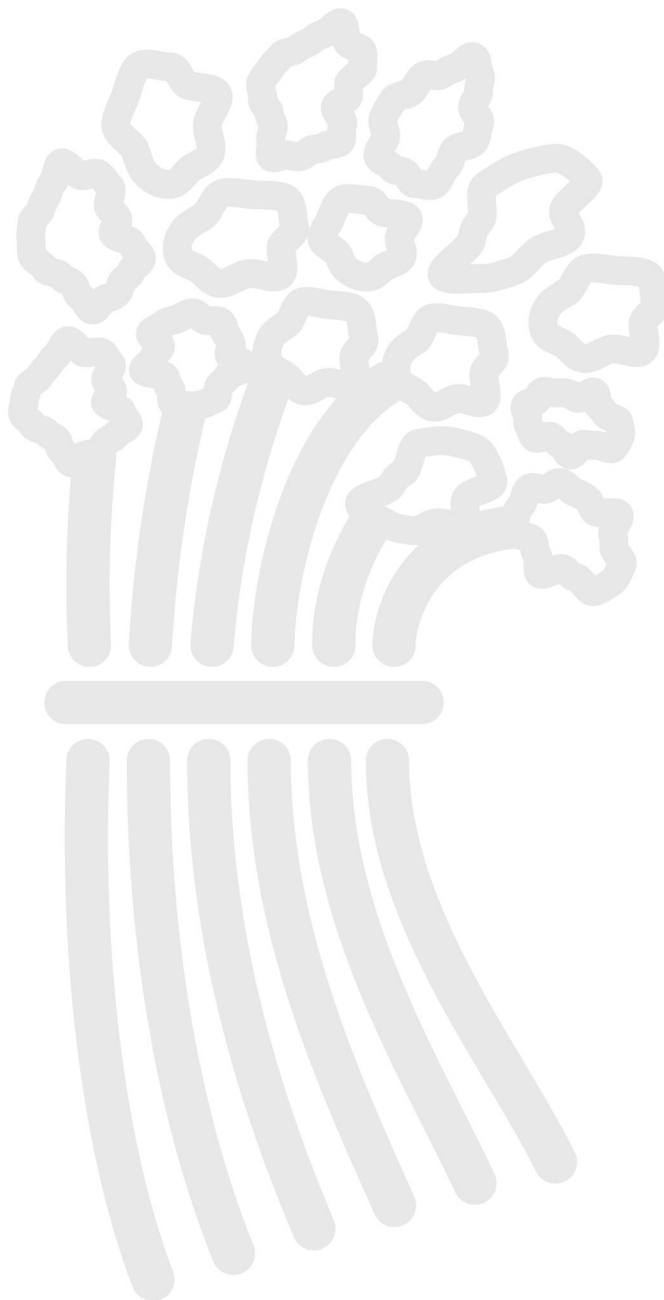
To confirm and implement the SALC advice (circulated previously).

19. Closure

Gordon Mussett

Gordon Mussett
Town Clerk

DATE: 22nd September 2009



Support for Those Affected by the Credit Crunch

The Town Council originally committed £25,000 towards providing debt counselling for those affected by the economic downturn.

To date only £5,000 has been allocated, and the sum of £20,000 remains available to support residents.

Of this £20,000 a small amount has been earmarked to provide free use of the Arts Centre for courses being organised by the LEAP Centre.

The voluntary agencies operating in the town with this group include:-

- The Citizens Advice Bureau
- The Foodbank
- Christians Against Poverty

In addition the following statutory agencies operate:-

- MENTA (providing advice for small businesses)
- Havebury Housing Partnership (providing an intervention service for tenants entering into arrears)
- The LEAP Centre (return to work training)

The Town Council's attempts to support these agencies have been as follows:-

Citizens Advice Bureau – declined to offer funding because of concerns regarding how it would be utilised. Asked to consider submitting a project funding bid – none received.

The Foodbank – received £1,500 funding grant. Have requested funding for a new van to assist with distribution, and have recently appealed for food donations.

Christians Against Poverty – received £3,500 in current year and over £1,000 in previous year.

MENTA – asked to consider joint project to employ a debt recovery/credit chasing employee on a short-term basis to reduce the outstanding debts owed to local businesses. Prefer to offer support via training/workshops on debt management for small businesses.

Havebury Housing – Meeting arranged to discuss options for a joint approach.

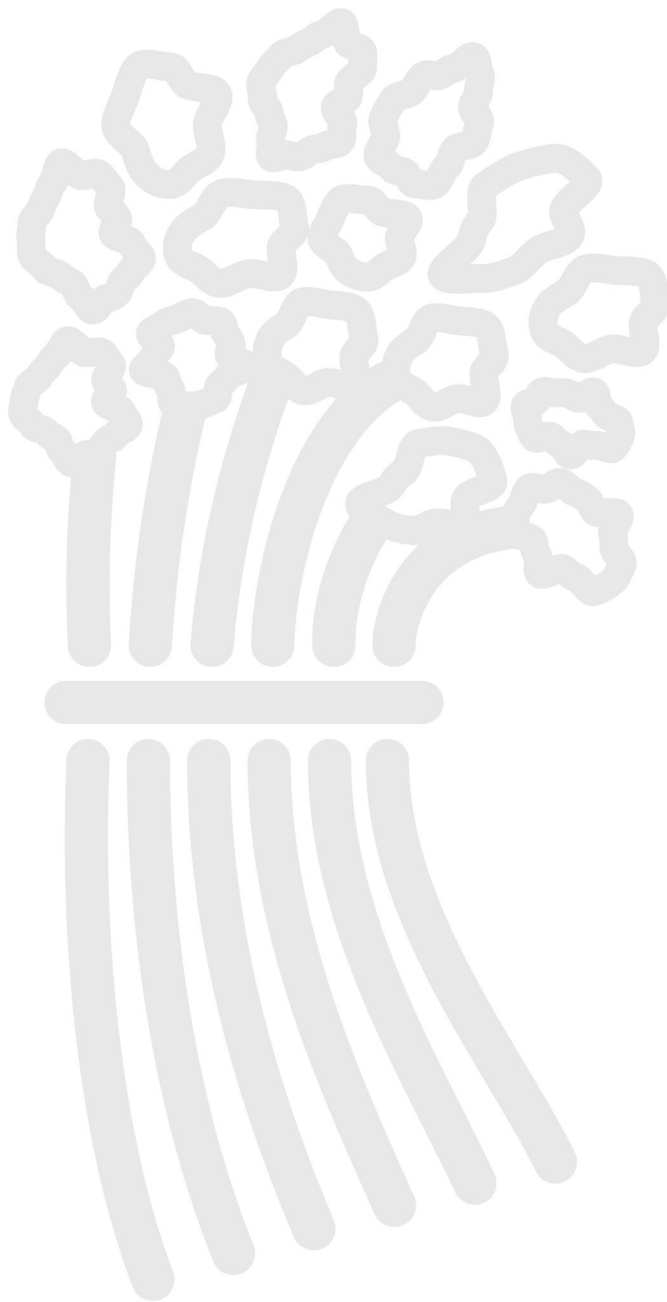
The LEAP Centre – offered rooms at Arts Centre free of charge to run courses. Offer not taken up yet.

Other options available to the Council:-

Provide additional support to local clubs/societies (particularly youth groups) to enable children of families affected by the credit crunch to access these clubs/societies.

Establish it's own advice/information service.

Members are asked to consider the options they would wish to pursue.



Open Air Meetings in 2010

Following on from the success of the open air meetings held during July, Members have asked for proposals for a similar run of meetings during 2010. This report outlines the options.

Time of Year

For there to be a reasonable chance of dry weather, and light evenings, the meetings should be held early July. July, according to the Met Office has lower average rainfall than either June or August, and the temperatures are similarly higher.

Some July dates would also enable any hired van to be used to support leisure events that occur during that period, thus reducing costs.

Time of Day

A 7.30 p.m. finish to the meetings seemed to be about right. It also enables a slight over-run if needed before the light fades.

Days of the Week

Any van would be on continuous hire – 5 days, a week, etc, so it makes sense financially to run the meetings over at least five evenings at a time, with the van being available for any weekend event. Members did express concerns over holding the events on two consecutive weeks, and perhaps a week between might be helpful in avoiding “burn out”. Suggested weeks are therefore weeks commencing 5th July and 19th July. It would be helpful if for July 2010 the monthly Planning meeting was held on 13th July and not the usual date of 6th July.

Advertising

The events this year were generally low-key, with advance notice in the Town Clerk's column, and some local leaflet drops on the day in question. For 2010 there should perhaps be a banner erected at each location with such wording as “Meet your Town Councillors here tonight”. Such banners cost around £100.

Locations

The locations selected for 2009 concentrated on those parts of the town that had experienced growth in the past 5 or 6 years, with fewer meetings in established parts of town. Repeating the events in 2010 enables new locations to be selected and it is suggested that these are:-

Chalkstone Way (between the Shetland Road entrances) (this was rained off this year)

Recreation Road

Junction of Chivers Road/Bergamot Road

Ann Suckling Road

Burton Close (on green fronting Burton End)

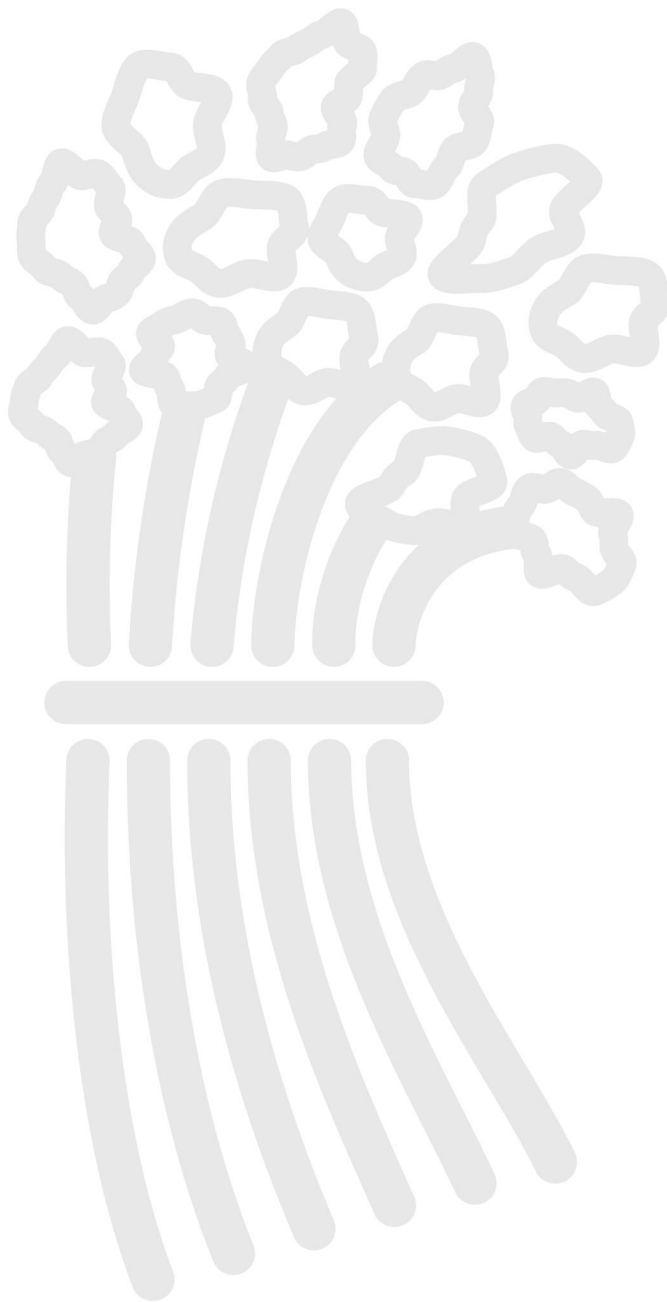
Between Thurlow Place and Girton Road

Howe Road (near Tractor Park)

Elmhurst Close
Millfields Way (near Kestrel Road)
Chalkstone Way (opposite Samuel Ward School entrance)

These locations have been selected because of their (except Elmhurst Close) reasonably high visibility to passing residents (on foot or in cars) and because there is ample green space to safely set up chairs and hold a meeting.

The Council is asked to agree these dates and locations and to put the sum of £750 into the 2010/11 budget to cover the costs of these meetings.



Introduction

The following matters have been raised to draw items to the attention of Haverhill Town Council. These matters came to the attention of BDO Stoy Hayward LLP during the audit of the annual return for the year ended 31 March 2009.

The audit of the annual return may not disclose all shortcomings of the systems as some matters may not have come to the attention of the auditor. For this reason, the matters raised may not be the only ones that exist.

The matters listed below are explained in further detail on the page(s) that follow;

- Section 1 does not add up by £1
- Fidelity Guarantee

The following issues have been raised as there are minor errors on the annual return which we wish to draw to the attention of the council so they do not occur again in future years.

Section 1 does not add up by £1

What is the issue?

Section 1 of the Annual Return does not add up by £1. We have assumed this is a rounding error.

Why has this issue been raised?

Section 1 of the Annual Return and the balance carried forward is incorrectly stated by £1.

What do we recommend you do?

The council should ensure in future years that rounding errors are eliminated.

Further guidance on this matter can be obtained from the following source(s):

Governance and Accountability in Local Councils in England and Wales - A Practitioners Guide, NALC/OVW/SLCC

The following issues have been raised to assist the council. The council is recommended to take action on the following issues to ensure that the council acts within its statutory and regulatory framework.

Fidelity Guarantee

What is the issue?

The council have reviewed the level of fidelity guarantee cover, however this still appears to be insufficient in light of the bank balances held at 31 March 2009 and the amount of precept then subsequently received in April 2009.

Why has this issue been raised?

A council, under S114 of the Local Government Act 1972, must take security as it considers sufficient in the case of any of its officers likely to handle its money. The council may decide that insurance is not 'sufficient' for them, but in order to come to this opinion they must have reviewed the requirement annually and they must have objective grounds for such a conclusion.

What do we recommend you do?

The council should consider the level of insurance cover and set it to a level that will protect the council against potential loss. The council should review the level of cover at least annually as circumstances may change throughout the year.

The amount should be sufficient to cover the maximum amount of money the council holds at any one time during the year. A council does not have to have fidelity guarantee insurance if it considers that no security is 'sufficient' but there must be objective grounds for such a conclusion. Smaller councils may decide therefore that the cost of this insurance is disproportionate to the risk involved. If this is so the council should minute this decision annually.

Further guidance on this matter can be obtained from the following source(s):

Local Council Administration, 7th Edition, Charles Arnold-Baker, Chapter 9.8
Governance and Accountability in Local Councils in England and Wales - A Practitioners Guide, NALC/OVW/SLCC

No other matters came to our attention.

For and on behalf of
BDO Stoy Hayward LLP
Date: 24 August 2009

The following actions have already been taken to address the issues:-

- a) Section 1 not adding up by £1

The figures entered on the form derive from the Accounting Package, which rounds entries to the nearest £1. In doing so the total can be £1 out (plus or minus). For 2010 onwards the total will

not be taken from the Accounting Package, but will be manually totalled.

b) Fidelity Insurance

The cover for the year under audit (2008/9) was sufficient (i.e. the Insured Value of the Council's monetary assets always exceeded the total sums held). The Auditors have identified that during 2009/10 this situation would not remain valid, and indeed the Insured Value had already been increased (by 20%) by the time of the Audit.

